

TITLE: Los Angeles Zionism: Beginnings and Growth
(1901-1929)

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Introduction

Historical Perspective

To comprehend the growth and development of the Zionist movement in Los Angeles, it is first necessary to examine the milieu in which it developed.

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, witnessed the birth and growth of two powerful secular competing ideas and movements within world Jewry: "Autonomism" and "Zionism". A third competing idea and movement pre-existed, "Emancipation". However, it also increased its competition, for the Jewish mind and soul, during this same historic period.

The movements born at this time, "Autonomism" and "Zionism" were both folk oriented in that they were predicated upon the idea of Jewish peoplehood and self-rule. The third idea, "Emancipation", espoused individualism and was anti-folk and antinationalistic, identifying Jewry as purely and simply a religious community, whose member shared the nationality of the country in which they were located.

"Emancipation" preceeded the other two movements by many years, having been spread by the Napoleonic expansion. However, it continued to be a major competitor to the newer ideas. Its influence, in fact played a major role in the division of the Jewish Religion into three branches. Although it was not limited to Reform Judaism, its ideation and dynamics caused Reform Judaism to grow. Conservative and Orthodox Judaism became formalized in response to Reform.

"Zionism", at the turn of the century, was at the opposite extreme to "Emancipation". Zionism stated that the Jewish people constituted a nation, that it fulfilled all the requirements of nationhood except the possession of a land. Zionism further stated that modern Jewry had the historic mission of reestablishing the Jewish Nation on the land and normalizing the condition of the Jewish people. It further emphasized that the "national homeland" which the Jews must possess and rebuild was the old homeland with which Jews and Jewish civilization were identified, "Eretz Yisrael, the "Land of Israel," Palestine.

"Autonomism" occupied the middle ground between the two extremes. "Autonomism" also recognized the Jewish people as a people, as did Zionism. However, it still emphasized primary Jewish identification and allegiance to the countries in which they were located, as did the adherents to the idea of "Emancipation". Nevertheless, Autonomism did not stress participation as equal individuals in those countries. They believed instead in Jewish self rule, as Jews, and in representation, through their own community, in the general life of the country. This was a Federal approach recognizing ethnic status in a wider society.

Both Zionism and Autonomism had variant sub-groups attached to them. These groups believed in the basic idea and approach of the general movement with some emphases and departures of their own.

In Autonomism the biggest variant group was the "Allgemeiner Yiddisher Arbeiter Bund," commonly known as the "Bund". The "Bundists" believed in Autonomism mixed with socialism. They wanted Jewish self-rule dominated by the working class and operating under the principles of socialism, in a wider state that was also socialist.. The Bund grew to be the largest most influential Autonomist party.

The activity the "Bund" and other Autonomist parties were predominantly in Russia and Eastern Europe. In the United States, Bundist, socialist, and Autonomist thinking was represented in the "Arbeiter Ring."

Zionism also developed variant forms: territorialism, which accepted Zionist formulations, but was willing to accept any land, not just "Palestine", Labor Zionism, Religious Zionism, Religious Labor Zionism, Marxist Socialist Zionism, and super-nationalistic Zionism. (Revisionist Zionism)

At the turn of the century and in the early twentieth century, all three competing Jewish ideas were present in America. The great waves of Jewish immigration that occurred in those years carried with them the ferment of these ideas and movement. They also continued their competition, with one another, on the American scene.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the beginnings and growth of one of these movement, Zionism, in Los Angeles, California, during this period.

This researcher believes that such an examination will cast light, not only, on Los Angeles but on the Jewish experience

in America in toto. Los Angeles has often been described as modern America in its essence. Perhaps, an understanding of the modern American Jewish experience can best be understood through an examination of a consequential Jewish movement in this "essential America," Los Angeles. The formative years were chosen for this study because it casts light on the movement as a whole, with its future devolvment.

The Los Angeles experience indeed substantiates the statement that Los Angeles is now American Jewry in microcosm, although it did not begin that way. In America none of the three major ideas and movements retained their original purity and purpose. Even Reform Temples today predominantly support Israel, thus indirectly recognizing Jewish peoplehood. The autonomistic socialism of the Bundists dwindled down into the socialism of the "Arbeter Ring" and then into the Liberalism of the "Workmens Circle" and the general Jewish Community. Early American Zionism never went further than philanthropic, political, financial and moral support of the creation and maintenance of the State of Israel. It never really fostered any programmes of Jewish nationalism such as Aliyah, extensive, organized nationalistic education (as it did in Europe) or an ethnic Kehillah demanding primary allegiance. It only supported the nationalism of other Jews outside the United States and in the State of Israel.

This support was, and is, also mostly on a philanthropic

and political basis. The problem of Zionism today is that since practically all Jews and Jewish organizations in America support Israel on a Philanthropic and political basis, they are losing their fundamental reason for a separate existence.

The American Jewish experience has had the same effect on the great secular movements as it has had on the great religious movements. Just as the three religious tendencies are becoming basically similar so are the formerly warring secular movements becoming basically similar. They are all "assimilatory emancipationist in their struggle to give and maintain the right of Jews to participate in society as individuals with the rights of individuals. They are all folk oriented in their recognition of the ethnicity of American Jews. They are all Zionists in their philanthropic and political devotion to the State of Israel and world Jewry.

Originally this was not true. The movements with their ideals were real, different and vastly competitive.

This homogenization of the secular movements became increasingly true in Los Angeles, however, very early. This style of secular Judaism that was dominant in Los Angeles at the onset eventually became the style of secular Judaism of the entire country. In a sense, Los Angeles pioneered American Judaism.

Chapter 1.

Zionist Beginnings in Los Angeles-First Decade 1901-1910

The modern American style of philanthropic, political support can be seen in its onset in Los Angeles. Victor Harris, the editor of the Bnai Brith Messenger, the only Anglo-Jewish newspaper in town, published a significant personal article in his newspaper on April 28, 1899. This article was, in effect, a call upon Los Angeles Jews to organize a "Zion Society." His stated reason was "we are heartily in favor of any move tending to colonize our downtrodden co-religionist." *1

For more than two years after this appeal, there was no organizational response from the approximately 2,500 Jews who lived in Los Angeles. *2 This was a predominantly German Jewish community. *3

The response finally occurred. The "Ahabath Zion Society" was formed in 1901 with Mr. Harris as its first President and Mr. L. Hillman as its first vice president. *4 Apparently the majority of the membership was East European. Mr. Harris was an exception. These East European Jews perhaps, exemplified by Mr. Hillman, the first vice-president, differed from their president, in being ethnic, cultural Zionists as well as philanthropic Zionists. *5

Apparently Zionist organizational work and involvement changed Mr. Harris, himself. The editor of the B'nai Brith Messenger sounded quite different from his original "call" article of 1899, in a Zionist News article in 1901. In this article he speaks of Zionism transmitting "the national language, culture and pride to the young people and creating their "positive identification with the Jewish Community." *6

This is a departure from the tone of the Mr. Harris of 1899 who favored a "Zion Society", which would merely move "to colonize our downtrodden co-religionists". Evidently Mr. Harris was being affected by his association. Nevertheless, one of Ahabat Zion's early members, writing much later, described the first president as remaining basically the same as the picture he paints of his views in the 1899 "call". *7

The Ahabath Zion Society was subcharted with the Federation of American Zionists. It therefore was an official part of the American Zionist movement. Its dues would be considered quite nominal today, but was a considerable sacrifice for the type of members the society attracted, mostly newly arrived Eastern European Angelenos. *8 Meetings were held at Foresters Hall, 107 $\frac{1}{2}$ N. Main Street every Sunday evening. Attendance at these meetings varied from 5 to 50 people. Harry Fram (who we will meet again and often in these pages) was the long time secretary of the society *9 and undoubtedly had great influence on its work.

The society's activities were economic, propangandistic and social. It worked for the Colonial Bank and the Jewish National Fund, economic institutions that supported the Zionist endeavor in Palestine. One influential member, George Bloom, started a project of tree planting in Gan Shmuel and Herzl Forest. Propangandistically, it tried to interest German Jewish Angelenos, the "establishment" of that day, in Zionism.

Two members, Harry Fram and H. Bloom combined the two basic

Zionist goals of the Organization. They sat up an entire night writing letters to every German Jew in Los Angeles asking them to invest \$5.00 in the Colonial Bank to propagandistically "sell" the German Jewish establishment on the efficacy of Zionism and enlist their economic support of the endeavor. *10 How this effort succeeded is not known but it probably did not fare well.

In the predominantly German Jewish Los Angeles, the society did not meet with great success. *11 After nine years of existence, there were only twenty nine members. *12 In terms of membership they certainly made no great inroads into the German Jewish community. Probably that community's economic participation in Ahabath Zion projects was also not too extensive.

It can be surmised that the strength of the idea of Emancipation caused this lukewarm response to the Zionist appeal in Los Angeles. Perhaps it showed a German-Jewish rejection of Jewish nationalism in favor of adaptation and assimilation into the general community as individuals. If this were true, corroborative evidence would remain in the existence of smashing diatribes against Ahabath Zion and its principles. Such evidence is not extant. Apparently Ahabath Zion made few waves. It did not arouse any great pro-Zionist feeling or Anti-Zionist activity.

The real cause of Ahabath Zion's lack of strong impact was in the type of Jewish community that existed in Los Angeles. It was a minimal community, not because it was German but because it was not

concernedly Jewish. Before the first World War, Jews came as individuals to Los Angeles. Their Jewish associations and commitments were weak, unjelled. This was a new community. They were much more interested in their own personal problems such a "making a living". *13 This individualistic self concern of Los Angeles Jewry would continue to play an important roll in the ebb and flow of Los Angeles Zionism throughout the decades.

Ahabath Zion continued to endure. Its members though few in number, were devoted. Some individaul members such as Harry Fram were instrumental in midwifing the birth of other Zionist and para-Zionist groups which ultimately greatly eclipsed Ahabath Zion in membership and economic accomplishment. *14 Ahabath Zion members George Bloom, Harry Fram and Jacob Topinsky were greatly responsible for the establishment of the "Golden Book Committee." This committee supported the Jewish National Fund. It was also the first attempt to unify all Zionists in a council at a slightly later time. *15 The war period and the early poast war saw the leadership of such Ahabath Zion members as Abraham Jonah Shapiro. Mr. Shapiro played a leading role during the mandate, which affected the entire Jewish community *16

The Ahabath Zion Society may not have witnessed any great increase in tis membership in these years, however it did see the widening of the Zionist spectrum. A new Zionist group was born in 1902. It was first called "The Young Zionis" and later the "Young Zionist Association"

or Y.Z.A. *17 Active in its birth was the omnipresent Harry Fram who we will see had a hand in the beginnings of practically all the early Zionist groupings. Also instrumental in Y.Z.A.'s birth were Al Horowitz, H. Horowitz, (his brother) Ben Davidson, S. Stein and L. Kretzer. *18

The young Zionists were more successful in recruitment than the older Ahavat Zion Society. From 50 to 250 members joined this group (probably the latter figure is more correct) *19

The early nineteen hundreds, especially after 1905, saw an increased immigration of young Eastern European Jews into the United States and into Los Angeles. (Their coming to Los Angeles usually took place after a sojourn in another part of the United States. However, their sources went back to East Europe) Because of their youth, these people were interested in social affairs, to meet other young people. Because of their background, they were interested in Zionism. The two interests joined together to cause the birth of the Young Zionists. *20

The activities of the Young Zionists predictably stressed the social and educational aspect of Zionism as well as the economic. The "social literary" meeting was the most important function of the group. These meetings featured speakers, papers and other educational programs that gave them more background into Zionism. *21 This type of meeting also provided many opportunities for social contacts. Meetings were interspersed with picnics, dances, outings and other outright social affairs.

Sometimes they were predicated upon Zionist reasons, such as fund raising for Zionist endeavour. Sometimes the motivation for the function was non-Zionist. (Once they had a masquerade ball to raise money for San Francisco Earthquake victims) At times they had no excuse for their functions except the implied need to further the social life of the Association. *22

The young Zionist Association also participated in the economic endeavors of American Zionism. Their efforts were directed toward the Jewish National Fund and the "Jewish Colonial Trust." Apparently they were especially concerned with "The Jewish Colonial Trust". In 1907 they devised a plan for installment buying of \$5.00 shares in the Jewish Colonial Trust by purchasing 10¢ stamps for a savings book. *23

Obviously Los Angeles Zionism's expansion into a second society did not give it any great economic muscle yet. That was to come later, in the 1920's.

However, the birth and growth of the Young Zionists into a credible Los Angeles group shows several things about Los Angeles. The Jewish community was beginning to change. Young East European Jews (albeit acculturated young East European Jews) began to abound. Ethnic and nationalist sentiments were becoming more familiar to Jewish Los Angeles. A new kind of Los Angeles Jew was developing who would be at least somewhat more concerned with Judaism and the Jewish community.

The Young Zionist Association pioneered the concept of "social

Zionism" in Los Angeles. Zionism gave the group an idealistic purpose. It also formed a reason for bringing Jewish young people together. This is an important function in diaspora Jewish life. It was especially so in the assimilated atmosphere of Los Angeles at the turn of the century.

In the 1920's the Herzl Club would use the same combination of Zionism and "shotchanism" (matchmaking) to establish its presence and further the cause of Zionism in this city. (In later periods other groups such as "Massada", the "Brandeis-Zohar Labor Zionists", "Rishon" and "Noar", would use the same formula. However, to the largest extent this formula was neglected.)

Zionism is a movement in need of young people for impetus and non-economic accomplishment. Young people have not been present in large numbers, except spasmodically. Perhaps, this is one reason for American Zionism's primarily philanthropic aspect.

With the post 1905 influx of Jews from an East European origin increasing, Zionism continued to grow in Los Angeles. The first decade of the twentieth century was a period of moderate expansion. By 1907 a Bnai Zion Society was in existence. *24 At the same time or shortly thereafter, two more Zionist Organizations were established in Los Angeles, the "Avat Zion Society #2 and the "Sisters of Zion" a women's Zionist Group. *25. Now there were a total of five Zionist societies. Los Angeles

was distant from the rest of the Jewish world, but it was ⁱⁿ no vacuum. The world wide movement, which so emotionally grasped Jews, was making itself felt in Los Angeles too, albeit only with East European Jews. The first decade of the twentieth Century started off slowly but it did show Zionist gains.

Chapter 1 Footnotes 1-25

1. Bnai Brith Messenger April 28, 1899
2. "Los Angeles" Jewish Encyclopedia (1904) viii 185
3. S. Rosen "Der Onhoibfun Tzionism in California", Joseph L. Malamut ed.
"Zunland California Diamond Jubilee Number " September 1925) pp73-75
says that there were only 75 East European Jewish families in Los Angeles at that time.
4. Dr. Max Nussbaum "History of Zionism in Los Angeles," Joseph L. Malamut ed.
Southwest Jewry Vol. 111 Los Angeles, Calif. 1957
5. S. Rosen, "Zunland" op. cit.
6. Bnai Brith Messenger March 8, 1901
7. S. Rosen "Zunland" Op. Cit.
8. Ibid
9. Dr. Max Nussbaum Southwest Jewry Op. cit.
10. S. Rosen "Zunland" Op. Cit.
11. Ibid - says there were only 75 East European Jewish families in Los Angeles at that time.
12. Nussbaum Southwest Jewry Op. Cit. Photstatic copy of "Ahabath Zions" membership list of 1910.
13. William Blumenthal interview (on tape) July 9, 1970
14. The Young Zionist Association, Hadassah and the Nathan Straus Palestine Society.
15. a) Bnai Brith Messenger, August 16, 1912
- 15 b.) Harry Fram, " A page from the past", George Saylin ed.
("Jubilee No. Jewish National Fund of Los Angeles") p.37

- 16a) J.L. Malamut "Zunland" (California Diamond Jubilee number) 1925.
- 16b) Bnai Brith Messenger July 9, 1920
- 17. Nussbaum, "Southwest Jewry" Op. Cit. Places birth of Y.Z.A. in 1902
- 18a.) Bnai Brith Messenger Aug. 31, 1906
- 18b.) J. L Malamut "Southwest Jewry Vol. 1" (Sunland Publishing, 1926) p.89
- 19a) S. Rose "Der Onhoib--" Zunland Op. Cit. says 250 members
- 19b.) Nussbaum "Southwest Jewry" Op. Cit says 50 members.
- 19c.) Bnai Brith Messenger Feb 15, 1907 seems to support Rose. If 19 new members were elected in one business meeting, its total membership was probably much higher than 50.
- 19d.) Bnai Brith Messenger Oct. 30, 1907 seems to support Rosens higher figure also. Article is about the 5th Anniversary of the Young Zionist with 200 couples in attendance.
- 20. S. Rosen, "Der Onhoib" "Zunland" Op. Cit.
- 21a) Bnai Brith Messenger Jan. 28, 1904
- 21b) Bnai Brith Messenger June 29, 1906
- 21c) Bnai Brith Messenger Sept. 27, 1907
- 21d) Bnai Brith Messenger July 9, 1915
- 21e.) Bnai Brith Messenger Oct. 15, 1915
- 22a. Bnd Brith Messenger April 30, 1906
- 22b. Bnai Brith Messenger Oct. 30, 1907
- 22c. Bnai Brith Messenger May 7, 1915
- 22d Bnai Brith Messenger May 18, 1905

- 22e. Bnai Brith Messenger Sept. 27, 1907
- 22f. Bnai Brith Messenger June 29, 1906
- 23a. Bnai Brith Messenger Jan. 28, 1904
- 23b. Bnai Brith Messenger Jan. 14, 1907
- 24. Bnai Brith Messenger April 26, 1907
- 25. Bnai Brith Messenger Aug. 16, 1912

Chapter 2

The second Decade of Los Angeles Zionism - 1910-1920

The second decade of Los Angeles Zionism began with a happy problem. Since there were five societies working for the same goals there was a need for the coordination of activities and the establishment of joint city wide endeavors. George Bloom and others had previously created a Golden Book, modeled after the National Golden Book, to raise money for a common Zionist concern, "the Jewish National Fund" *1 Now the idea was expanded to a Golden Book Committee to handle all joint Zionist endeavors. *2 In effect it was the first Zionist Council in Los Angeles. Its activities ranged from joint picnics, to sending speakers to synagogues and organizing protests over the adoption of German in the Technicum. *3

The second decade of the 20th century also began to witness some interesting innovations in Los Angeles Zionism. On January 21, 1913 a new type of Zionist group was formed, "Hoachocosa". This new group was not established for social, educational or propagandistic reasons. It was not a philanthropic economic group supporting Zionist institutional work in Palestine. It was a "hard nose" capitalistic organization of investors modeled off of similar groups already in existence in St. Louis, New York, and Chicago. Its purpose was to form a corporation and sell stock. With the resulting capital, it would purchase and develop land in Palestine. *4

This group was interesting for several reasons:

- 1.) It sought to bring about personal involvement in Palestine. This made Palestine real not just an object of charity.
- 2.) Its economic endeavor was capitalistic, not philanthropic.
- 3.) It concentrated only on the economic aspect.
- 4.) It represented a maturation of Los Angeles Zionists, who were then able to participate in economic endeavors of substance.
- 5.) It brought new influential people into the Zionist movement.

Some of the leaders of Hoachooosa such as its President, George Bloom and its secretary, Charles Eisenstein, had been active in the Ahavath Zion Society or the Young Zionist Association previously. However, other activists such as Dr. Leo Blass and Attorney Hyam Shapiro were new. *5 These were men of some stature and some money. However, even these men were still entirely of East European origin. They had no real status in the predominantly German Jewish establishment most influential in the Los Angeles Jewish community. *6

At this point things were about to change. During the course of Los Angeles Zionist history there were a number of important influential visitors, from outside Los Angeles. The most significant visit was that of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Straus of New York in the spring of 1914. As a result, two Zionist oriented (if not strictly Zionist) organizations were born: The "Nathan Straus Palestine Advancement Society" and "Hadassah". *7 Even more important than the founding

of new organizations, leadership from the German establishment became involved in supporting Zionist causes and in Zionism itself.

The Straus family, not only owned and operated Macy's Department Store in New York but they also represented the very epitome of the German Jewish establishment in the United States. Mr. Nathan Straus was one of the most respected members of this prestigious family that included the first Jewish Cabinet member in United States history. *8 Nathan Straus himself was greatly renowned for business, civic service and philanthropy. His prestige was truly profound and nationwide. *9

Some Angelenos also knew that he was friendly to Zionism and took advantage of that knowledge. On March 22, 1914 a reception was held for the distinguished visitors at the old Bnai Brith Hall on Seventeenth Street near Figueroa. An unannounced resolution and proposal was planned which would use the prestige of the Strauses to involve Los Angeles German Jews in Zionist support activities.

The leaders of established Jewry in Los Angeles were seated in the first row of chairs directly facing the renowned guests. They could look at the visitors face to face, but they were also under their scrutiny. The seating was planned to make it difficult for Los Angeles leaders to fail to participate in this resolution or proposal, in honor of the prestigious guests.

After greetings and speeches were heard, a resolution was moved

and unanimously adopted to establish a society "for the purpose of making contributions to the economic restoration of Palestine." The Nathan Straus Palestine Advancement Society was born. It was born with the help and participation of many of the Los Angeles German-Jewish leadership. The first president of the Society was Marco R. Newmark, a scion of one of the most outstanding Los Angeles German Jewish families (He later became a complete Zionist and Zionist leader. He was an early President of the Los Angeles District of the Zionist Organization of America) The second President of the Nathan Straus Society was Louis M. Cole a former president of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and a son-in-law to the Hellman family. *10

Harry Fram, the Zionist "Kochleffel" of Ahavat Zion, Young Zionist Association and Bnai Zion was instrumental in this drama of the formation of the Nathan Straus Palestine Advancement Society and its involvement of German Jewish Los Angeles. *11 He never forgot the propagandistic goals of the old Ahavat Zion Society in bringing German Jews into the movement for the support of the economic restoration of Palestine. He still was, in a sense, sitting up all night with H. Bloom writing letters to every German Jew in Los Angeles asking them to invest \$5.00 in the Colonial Bank.

The establishment of Hadassah, though directly related to the above story, tarried for two years. The forming of Hadassah was also the result of the Straus visits to Los Angeles and Harry Fram's zeal in devising methods to involve the Los Angeles Jewish establishment in Zionist causes.

Apparently the relationship, between Harry Fram and the Strauses had not ended in 1914. Mrs. Nathan (Lina) Straus was again visiting in Southern California during the winter and spring of 1916. On March 13, Mrs. Straus replied, in a letter to Harry Fram, accepting an invitation to attend a meeting on March 30, 1916 at Bnai Brith Temple organized for the purpose of establishing the Los Angeles Chapter of Hadassah. *12 Los Angeles Hadassah was chartered nationally on July 1916. The long significant career of Hadassah in Los Angeles was launched. Furthermore, unlike the Nathan Straus Palestine Advancement Society, it was launched as an official Zionist Group with a charter from National Hadassah, a branch of the Zionist Federation and later of the Zionist Organization of America. *13 Nevertheless, unlike existing Zionist groups it was not exclusively East European and it was not alienated from the German-Jewish Power structure. In fact, its birth took place inside the Bnai Brith Temple. Meetings also continued there for a long time. Many people considered Hadassah as an adjunct to this Temple, the very center of the German Jewish establishment of Los Angeles. *14

However, the birth of Los Angeles Hadassah, which furthered the process of bringing the Zionist cause into accepted respectable circles, did not just happen. A Mr. Samuel Goldstein and Reverend David Likhaitz had been working at establishing Hadassah for some time, without much success. In the winter of 1916, the visiting Lina Straus showed interest. *15 Hadassah was established in the

spring of that year and chartered that summer as a result of that interest. *16 Harry Fram, again, was tremendously influential in its establishment. *17 This Zionist activist was again responsible for another double victory for Los Angeles Zionism. Another Zionist Organization was born, which would expand in the future to the point where it would outstrip all others in size and in many accomplishments. Furthermore, Zionism itself was given a respectable image.

Although the establishment of Los Angeles Hadassah was a master stroke in promoting respectability for Zionism, it did not really convert the new membership to the Zionism it espoused. Early Los Angeles Hadassah was Zionist in name and association only. *18 The main activities centered on small philanthropic endeavors such as sewing children's clothing to send to Palestine, gathering clothing for hospitals, and a milk fund. *19 National Headquarters once referred to it as "the Los Angeles Sewing Circle". *20 Indeed, it was principally a sewing circle at that time. Others also referred to it in this manner. *21

Normal Zionist activities such as political pressure, propaganda or even self-education into the principles of Zionism were largely shunned. Henrietta Szold, the founder and leader of the National Hadassah once received a letter from the Secretary of the Los Angeles Chapter in 1917 (Bertha Brown, later Mrs. Adolph Sieroty) which complained of recieving too large a number of bulletins

from the National office. The letter was concerned with cost of postage in mailing them to each member because the group did not meet regularly. Miss Szold did not think that such an attitude was truly Zionist. *22 Miss Szold wrote an appeal to Harry Fram to monitor the group so as to "help out" in infusing some Zionism into it. *23

Los Angeles Hadassah leadership was not truly actively Zionist until the advent of Mrs. Adolph Sieroty to the presidency in the middle 1920's. Mrs. Sieroty proved to be a dynamic active Zionist leader in Los Angeles. *24

Notwithstanding the lack of Zionist enthusiasm in early Hadassah, its addition to the Los Angeles Zionist fold was extremely important to the Zionist movement.

The second decade also witnessed more interesting innovations in Los Angeles Zionism. Hyphenated, variant Zionism made its appearance, Religious-Zionism in the form of "Mizrachi" and Labor-Zionism in the form of the "Farband." The beginnings of both groups, at this time, were tentative. They did not have their real births and growth until the 1920's.

Mizrachi, the Religious-Zionist Organization was established in 1916 by Rabbi I. Werne of Beth Israel Congregation, the first Orthodox Congregation in Los Angeles. *25. An attempt to give it impetus took place in March 1917. Rabbi Meir Berlin, President of National Mizrachi, visited Los Angeles and spoke at all of the

Orthodox Synagogues from March 3rd through March 8th. *26

Probably there was an increase in membership for a short while.

However, this prestigious visit did not seem to have a lasting effect. Nine years later Mizrahi had to be organized once more. *27

Labor-Zionism also came to Los Angeles in 1913. Poalei Zion began with 5 members meeting in a private home. It did not begin significantly until later. *28 The first sizable form of Labor Zionism was in the Jewish National Workers Alliance, the "Farband" which started in 1917 with 20 members. Unlike Poalei Zion, it concentrated on the fraternal and insurance aspect more than the political aspect of Zionism. It remained the only branch of the Farband for almost fifteen years.* 29 However, there would be further advances for Labor Zionism under "Poalei Zion" in the 1920's.

The main stream of Los Angeles Zionism itself also changed in the latter part of this decade. As a result of the 1918 Buffalo Zionist convention the District system was imposed upon Los Angeles. The outlines of Los Angeles Zionism under a national Zionist Organization of America, as it exists today can be seen developing at this time. This did not occur without a great deal of dissatisfaction on the part of Los Angeles Zionists. They argued against the impersonality of the plan and the overcentralization that it would impose, which would stifle the creative urge. *30

The great convulsion of World War I also a product of the second decade of the twentieth century, could not fail to have a great impact

on that periods Zionism in Los Angeles. Although the battlefields were distant and America's involvement tarried, the Jewish world was affected dramatically. It was affected negatively, by battles churning over the sections of Europe that had the highest Jewish concentrations. The Yishuv (the Jewish settlement in Palestine) was undergoing great repression from the Turkish government which doubted its loyalty. Starvation and displacement was rife both in Europe and Palestine. American help through the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was cut off when the United States entered the war.

The Jewish world, especially the Zionist movement was positively affected by the Allied overtures of friendship. The Balfour Declaration promising the Jews a "homeland in Palestine," emotionally appealed to all Jews, even a great number who were committed to the road of emancipation. The world witnessed for the first time since the fall of the second commonwealth, a Jewish military, contingent fighting under its own banners on holy Palestinian soil.

These dramatic events did not by-pass provincial Los Angeles. Allied recognition of the Zionist movement as being representative of the Jewish people gave Los Angeles Zionism more currency among the Jewish citizens of this city.

When the Balfour Declaration was announced, and after General Allenby captured Jerusalem, Los Angeles Zionists staged a

tremendous rally in celebration and identification at Clunes Auditorium at 5th and Olive in downtown Los Angeles (Philharmonic Auditorium) on January 27, 1918. Rabbi Isadore Myers, an old Los Angeles Zionist activist and leader chaired the rally which had to turn away thousands of people who wanted to attend. The Auditorium had at least a 5000 capacity. (This was at a time when the entire Jewish population of Los Angeles was only 20,000 according to Vorspan and Gartner in the "History of the Jews of Los Angeles").

Great honor was conferred upon Los Angeles Jews and Zionists by the Los Angeles non- Jewish community when stellar figures participated in this rally. Rabbi Myers was introduced to the assembly by Dr. Glen Mc Williams, the personal representative of Mayor Woodman. The Reverend Dr. John Cowley, the representative of Catholic Bishop John Cantwell and the Reverend Dr. James A. Francis of the First Baptist Church addressed the assembly. Establishment Jewish personages such as Rabbi Dr. Sigmund Hecht and Rabbi Dr. Edgar Magnin of Bnai Brith Temple also addressed the rally. The major address appealing for the Foundation Fund (Keren Hayesod) was made by the Reverend Reynold E. Blight, Pastor of the "Church of the People." The Reverend William Blackstone presented the Zionist resolutions unanimously adopted by the assembly with the veteran Zionist Dr. Louis G. Reynolds. Even a United States Navy Contingent made an appearance.*31 Indeed, it appeared that the Zionist speakers such as Dr. Reynolds, Dr. David L. Liknaitz, Mr. Chaim Shapiro played a secondary roll at this tremendously successful rally.

This emotional outpouring demonstrated several things: the pent up concern of Los Angeles Jews with the fate of their relatives in Europe and Palestine, the appeal of the Zionist movement as a solution to this concern and the acceptance of Zionism as legitimate, not only by all parts of the Jewish community but by the non Jewish community as well. There could be no doubt that Zionism was no longer just a quixotic weightless plaything of East European Jews. World events put Los Angeles Zionism before the eyes of the entire community.

This event also marked the first attempt in Los Angeles of a large scale mass appeal for a Zionist Fund Institution. Reverend Blight raised \$10,000 for the Foundation Fund (Keren Hayesod) *32 (Interestingly at this Zionist rally denoting self pride and confidence the Los Angeles Times quotes a "prominent Jew" as saying "This - - - will in no way interfere with the raising of money with which to carry on the war. The men who are giving to the rebuilding fund are men who are abundantly able to buy Liberty Bonds of big denominations, and they will buy them when asked to do do." Jews were still fearful of the charge of dual loyalty.) This type of activity was later to become the outstanding manifestation of Los Angeles Zionism.

Zionist fervor in Los Angeles, aroused by the war and the Balfour Declaration, did not end with mass meetings. A local Jewish Legion committee was formed which consisted of veteran Zionist activists, Rabbi Isadore Myers, George Bloom, Maurice

Kaufman and I. Saumoff. They enlisted young Angelenos into the Jewish Legion, of the British Army. These young men participated in the first Jewish military formation since the fall of the second commonwealth. *33

Chapter 2 Footnotes

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3a. Bnai Brith Messenger April 26, 1912

3b. Bnai Brith Messenger Aug 8, 1913

3c. Bnai Brith Messenger Jan. 16, 1914

4a. Bnai Brith Messenger Jan. 31, 1913

4b. Bnai Brith Messenger Feb. 14, 1913

4c. Bnai Brith Messenger May 2, 1913

4d. Bnai Brith Messenger May 9, 1913

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12 b. Bnai Brith Messenger Oct. 26, 1917

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13b Rivka Goldberg interview (Tape in possession of Author) Aug. 4, 1970

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- 19a. Riche interview Op. Cit.
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Chapter III

The Third Decade: The 1920's

The third decade of Los Angeles Zionism began with a clash of cymbals. The great war to save democracy was fought and won. A peace treaty had been written which not only concerned itself with the rights of Jewish and other minorities, but underscored the claims of both Autonomism and Zionism. The Jewish right to its own participating communities within central and east European countries was recognized. The Jewish claim to a homeland in Palestine was endorsed. Combined with this, the apparent success of the process of emancipation in Germany and the West, indicated that all three Jewish secular movements would have their day in this brave new decade.

In Los Angeles, Zionism, apparently, had the most appealing success, to the Jewish man in the street. This was demonstrated in a gigantic display never before seen in the Los Angeles Jewish Community. This display was occasioned by the desire of Los Angeles Jews to honor Great Britain in its assumption of the Palestine Mandate.

That Mandate was given to Britain by the League of Nations. Its purpose was to implement the Balfour Declaration by providing a "National Home for the Jewish People" within Palestine.

Los Angeles Jews responded to this news with emotional

enthusiasm. Under the direction and leadership of the Los Angeles Zionist District, sixty five Jewish Organizations participated in a gigantic rally. Between 10,000-25,000 attended the rally in Exposition Park. *1 (The Los Angeles Times of June 28, 1920 gave the figure of 25,000. The Bnai Brith Messenger of July 9, 1920 gave the figure of 10,000.) In either case the figure is most impressive considering the size of the Los Angeles population at that time. Three years later, there were only 43,000 Jews in Los Angeles. *2

The rally was preceded by a massive motorcade of three thousand automobiles that made their way to the park from the Courthouse. The motorcade was joined by a marching section at Jefferson Street on its way to the park.

The celebration was officially begun at 3:00 P.M. by Abraham (Jonah) Shapiro, the President of the Los Angeles Zionist District, who greeted the Assembly in the name of the Zionist Organization of America. Despite the participation of other groups, it was strictly a Zionist affair. The chairman of the day, Rabbi Isador Myers, was introduced by Marco R. Newmark, the President of Los Angeles Lodge of the Bnai Brith, and the first President of the Nathan Straus Palestine Advancement Society (and later the first German Jewish President of the Los Angeles Zionist District). Other addresses were made by Judge W. H. Thomas, Rabbi Moses Rosenthal, Dr. Louis G. Reynold, Dr. Leo Blass (who spoke in Yiddish the Japanese consul

who requested permission to speak, and Mr. H Gearing who represented the British Consul. A resolution praising and congratulating the British government for accepting the mandate was passed by the rally, in the name of " - - - we, the Zionists of Southern California in great mass meeting assembled." *3

This was truly a manifestation of identity with the aims of the Zionist movement by Jewish Los Angeles. The participation of sixty five Jewish groups, the turnout and the fervor displayed showed the great involvement of Los Angeles Jewry in the Zionist dream. They did not even cavil at being officially identified as Zionists. The beginning year of the new decade certainly presaged ten years of great Zionist achievement.

The paradox of Los Angeles Zionism manifested itself most interestingly at this time. The 25,000 who allowed themselves to be identified as Zionists, at the mass meeting, did not troop to colors when the "hoopla" ended. *4 General Zionist membership during the 1920's never reached the figure of 2,000.*5 Labor Zionist membership was also quite modest during that period. *6 This was not a period of great personal involvement in Zionist activities other than fundraising. The numbers of Zionists remained small but the numbers of dollars raised for Zionist institutions and causes escalated tremendously. The number of people joining the Zionist Organization of America was modest. The number of

people contributing to Keren Hayesod and the Jewish National National Fund was significant. *7

In a sense the presagement of June 27, 1920 was wrong. There was no terrific growth in membership and personal involvement of Los Angeles Jews in Zionism in the 1920's. In another sense, the presagement of June 27, 1920 was correct. Los Angeles Jews did continue their identification with the Zionist cause in the 1920's. However it was a philanthropic, "pocketbook", identification. They supported other Jews in their nationalist endeavor. They felt emotionally involved in their success in recreating the "Alt-Neuland." They were eager to support it in any financial and political way, but they were not prepared to be a part of it. This kind of financial and political support does not require membership in a Zionist group, although it does recognize Zionist leadership.

The "hoopla" of Exposition Park was not counterfeit nor was it ephemeral. It did denote the success of the Zionist appeal and the growth of Zionist support. It did not denote the success of Zionism as a way of life for American Jews.

This was the outstanding trend of Los Angeles Zionism when it began. It continued as its outstanding manifestation with increased emphasis and tempo, into the 1920's.

Los Angeles Zionists were disappointed in the 1920's by their lack of ability to reflect obvious Jewish sympathy and identification in greatly increased membership. *8 However,

Zionist leadership did not neglect the effort to recruit. Rabbi Isadore Myers, the Chairman of both successful rallies in 1918 and 1920, continued his efforts, of many years standing, in recruitment until his death in 1923, in an automobile accident. *9 During the High Holidays Rabbi Myers, Dr. Louis G. Reynolds and other leaders would speak at the various synagogues to try to recruit more members. *10 Speakers, leaders, scholars, national and international Zionists periodically visited the city to lecture and promote membership. *11

The social approach at recruitment and fundraising reappeared in the spring of 1921 when a great Zionist Ball was held. It featured the great movie and entertainment stars Bebe Daniels and Carmel Myers (the daughter of Rabbi Isadore Myers). However, it also was unsuccessful, achieving only a small turnout. *12

An attempt was made to involve the religiously unaffiliated and newly arrived Los Angeles Jews in Zionism, in 1923. The Zionist Organization of American sponsored a "mushroom" synagogue for the High Holiday services, which was addressed by many speakers, apparently in the hope of attracting new membership. *13 Z.O.A.'s entrance into the field of High Holiday "mushroom synagogues" was not again repeated, but recruitment drives continued. *14

(Interestingly enough, one area of possible important Zionist membership was neglected in the 1920's as it was previously. Los Angeles, then as now, had a great number of college campuses

located in and around its environs. However, they were neglected. No attempt was made to establish a viable Zionist movement on campus *15 This is quite interesting, considering the fact that the leadership of the World Zionist movement, of that decade, exemplified by Chaim Weizmann came from the colleges and universities of Central and Western Europe.)

The great Jewish masses did not join in membership in the Zionist movement. They were still comparatively new in Los Angeles and were primarily involved in their own economic problems. *16 However, modest growth did occur, important changes did take place, and Zionist leadership was being developed and accepted by many elements of the community *17 The modest expansion of membership, the creation of new groups and the development of different forms of Zionism prompted another effort at establishing a Zionist council, in 1927. Aaron Riche, the President of the Los Angeles District of the Z.O.A. was concerned with the overlapping activities of the various Zionist Organizations in Los Angeles. In order to prevent this, he called for the establishment of a Zionist Council to promote and coordinate Zionist activities. *18 Mr. Riche's attempt at coordination at this time was not too successful. *19 However, it does demonstrate that there was growth and proliferation in Los Angeles Zionism even though it was disappointingly unspectacular.

New and important leadership was also materializing and developing in Los Angeles Zionism. Dr. M.J. Wissotsky, Aaron Riche, Benjamin M. Goldran, Jacob Alkow and others devoted themselves to organizational development. *20 Jacob Alkow, an arrival from New York actually involved the German dominated Los Angeles Jewish Federation in furthering Zionist programs in youth work and in education. *21 Under his direction and their sponsorship there was developed in Los Angeles a Zionist oriented Jewish Center in the Boyle Heights District.

Its purpose was to provide a Jewish environment and impart a sense of Jewish peoplehood into the youth of Boyle Heights. A "Modern Talmud Torah" was also established by Mr. Alkow with Federation assistance. This school used as its model the Zionist Schools of Eastern Europe and was based upon Hebrew culture. *22 Although these Zionist achievements of Mr. Alkow were significant, they did not really indicate the involvement of the German Jewish establishment in the Zionist dream. It just indicates again their tolerance, lack of antagonism, and the charitable inclinations of the Los Angeles establishment. *23

The establishment of the center and Hebrew School do not indicate the widening of the program of the organized Zionist movement into personal involvement and organized youth work. They were essentially the Zionist program of one man, Jack Alkow, supported from the non-Zionist sources of the Jewish Federation and private groupings.

From the Organization viewpoint, one of the most significant names in Los Angeles at this period, deserving special mention, is Dr. M. J. Wissotsky. Besides being one of the prime organizers of the tremendously successful Keren Hayesod campaigns of this decade, he gave an inordinate amount of his time and energy in building up the Zionist organization in Los Angeles. From his arrival in 1918 till his death in 1925 he devoted himself single-mindedly to Zionism and its financial causes from personal investment to tremendous campaigns such as Keren Hayesod. He did this as an ordinary member of Z.O.A. and as the President of the Los Angeles District. He spent more time on Zionism than he did on his own medical practice. In 1922, he went to Palestine for a year. He returned to prepare for permanent emigration. He died before he could achieve this dream.^{#24} In a period in which the concept of "Aliyah" was foreign to American Zionism, Dr. Wissotsky was truly an unusual leader.

One of the important new Zionist organizations that developed in the 1920's was the Herzl Zionist Club. It was unusual in that it concentrated upon young people. It was a young adult Zionist group that brought unmarried people into Zionism and it achieved considerable membership. However, it was not a youth group oriented to teenage and college age young people. ^{#25}

One evening in the Fall of 1921 several young professionals

including Dr. Eugene Gold, Dr. Miriam Shapiro, Jacob Alkow, Rose Pahn and others met at the home of Rose Pahn and organized the Herzl Club. It became successful and attracted mostly lower middle class young people into Zionism. Once again the formula of "social Zionism" was employed in the growth of the Zionist movement. Young Jewish Angelenos needed a place to meet one another and an occasion, to fraternize. The Herzl Zionist Club met this need and used it to further the Zionist purpose. *26

Originally the program of the Herzl Club consisted solely of Zionist lectures and discussions and classes in Hebrew and History. At that time, it grew only to a membership of forty or fifty. Later when social elements were introduced, Herzl's membership suddenly increased to three hundred.

Despite its social background Herzl was an active group in work for Zionist causes. In fact it became known for its work and for the "harmonious homey feeling" that the members had toward each other. *27

The Herzl Club always remained within the Los Angeles District of the Z.O.A. during the 1920's. At one time, because of its growth and its age difference, it considered forming its own district. *28

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization continued to grow in the beginning of the new decade. *29 Nevertheless, at first it also continued to display shallow content in its Zionism and in its work for Zion. *30 A small expansion of Hadassah's aims

is noted in the Bnai Brith Messenger of October 15, 1920, when it was announced that Hadassah would make badly needed hospital supplies in the coming year as well as sew "children's garments" as they had done exclusively until that time. However, this was not to endure. New leadership came to the fore in Hadassah later in the decade in the form of Mrs. Adolph Sieroty. Under that leadership Hadassah participated more fully in an extensive American Zionist program. *31

The 1920's also witnessed another change in Hadassah. Women's Zionism also looked youthward. In 1925-26 the first Junior Hadassah Group was organized in Los Angeles with twelve members under the presidency of Rose Pahn (who was also instrumental in the founding of the Herzl Club.) By 1927, Junior Hadassah had already expanded into one hundred members. *32 Young women as well as the older women were being attracted into Zionism under the Hadassah banner in that decade.

General Zionist and Women's Organizations were not the only ones that materialized and expanded in this decade. The real birth and growth of hyphenated Zionism also took place at this time.

There had been movement previously toward the organization of Labor Zionism in Los Angeles as early as 1913. At that time Fishel Riskin, Yankel Weiner, Aaron and Chaim Shapiro, I. S. Naumoy, Joseph Coodly and Joseph Hirsh met together in a private home to begin Los Angeles' first Labor Zionist group. *33

Aaron and Chaim Shapiro were instrumental in this beginning.*34

The Farband variety of Labor Zionism was organized as early as 1917.*35 However, the real "coming of age" of Labor Zionism did not occur until 1922. Up until that time Labor Zionism remained tiny. The Farband Labor Zionist order did not expand into a second branch until 1932.*36

Labor Zionism in Los Angeles really began as a significant movement, in the 1920's around the figure of Dr. Nathan Saltzman. *37 Membership in this form of Zionism paralleled general Zionist growth, although it was somewhat smaller. As in the general Zionist movement, there was no dramatic increase in membership, with the entrance of this new decade of expectations. As in general Zionism, there was a modest growth. The exact size of Poalei Zion, the Labor Zionist Party Group, was probably in the neighborhood of a thousand. We do know that it did not achieve its greatest membership of 1,200 until much later. *38 The Farband, the Labor Zionist fraternal order, continued to exist then as only one branch. It did not expand as a more complete organization until 1932. *39 Despite its lack of drama, Labor Zionism grew, developed and occupied an important place in the development of Zionism as a whole. *40 It enlarged the scope of Zionism to include more of the entire Jewish community. General Zionism appealed to the East European Jew in business and in the professions. Labor Zionism widened the Zionist roof to cover the laboring man, also recently arrived from East Europe. Socialism and socialist enthusiasm

were carried by these working class families into their new home.

This socialist impulse led to the growth of the predominantly Jewish Trade Unions such as the International Ladies Garment Workers. The presence of a Labor Zionist movement in Los Angeles allowed for the involvement of these people as well as others in the Zionist dream without denying their impulse toward socialism.

As in the general Jewish community this involvement was done, to a lesser degree though membership and to a wider degree though monetary and other kinds of support. Predominantly the wider Jewish unions and Socialist organizations were non-Zionist with a history of mild anti-Zionism. Despite their philosophy, in times of need they would support their fellow working class Jews and their socialist Zionists institutions. *41 Similar to the general community, in a sense, they shared the dream and could not act in an antagonistic manner toward their brothers. The presence of Labor (socialist) Zionism in Los Angeles allowed for this type of development. It formed the bridge between the socialist labor movement with its working class families and the Zionist dream. It allowed for working class support of that dream. The Labor Zionists in Los Angeles actively worked for this kind of rapprochement, even when it seemed unlikely. *42

Rivka Goldberg, newcomer to Los Angeles at the latter part of the 1920's was an example of this effort. She was also an organizer for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Because of this position she could gain entre to the meetings and to the personalities of her Labor brethren. Labor Zionism employed her in this effort. Although her reception was often cold, she was relieved. In the end when socialist Zionist institutions such as the Histadrut called for support, their Labor brothers in the I.L.G.W.U. produced that needed support. *43

The 1926 Los Angeles visit of Yitzhak ben Zvi in behalf of the Histadrut campaign, also illustrated this rapprochement.

The majority of the leaders of the Jewish Labor movement in Los Angeles were heirs of socialist, autonomistic Bundism, antagonistic to Zionism. *44

Yitzhak ben Zvi, later the second President of Israel, was one of the leaders of Poalei Zion (the labor Zionist party) in Palestine. In March of 1926 he visited Los Angeles in behalf of the Histadrut. (The Histadrut was the Jewish Palestinian Labor Union, but more importantly it was an instrument of Zionism.)

A reception and conference was organized by the Poalei Zion and was chaired by the veteran Labor Zionist, Aaron Shapiro. A cross section of Jewish Labor participated in that reception and conference. Not only did the International Ladies Garment workers and the Painters and Carpenters Unions participate, but more surprisingly, branches of the "Workmens Circle" which was directly Bundist descended, also participated in this supportive meeting. *45

There is only one exception to this benign picture of the working class Jewish attitude toward Zionism. A significant Communist movement existed in Jewish Los Angeles during the 1920's.

It was pronouncedly antagonistic to Zionism. This antagonism included Labor Zionism. *46 However, the Communist movement was and remained an "in group" with little influence on the wider working class community. *47 In this way it was very different from Labor Zionism. The Labor Zionist movement was small but significant and was able to reach out and affect the entire working class Jewish Community of the 1920's. The Communist movement was small but significant and remained an "in group" affecting only one another. It did not appeal to the wider working class Jewish community nor did it capture that community's support for its programs. The Communist dream was alien to the entire Jewish working class community while the Zionist dream was not.

Los Angeles Labor-Zionism was unusual for another reason. It achieved a close relationship of mutual understanding, sympathy and cooperation with the other branches of the Los Angeles Zionist Movement. Cooperation was strong and supportive in Los Angeles, probably more so than in most other areas of the country.*48 This mutuality of feeling and cooperation in this decade was somewhat remarkable. Class antagonisms, expressed in socialism carried over from Europe, was still strong.

During the 1920's Labor Zionism paralleled Los Angeles general

Zionism in yet another way. Hadassah lost its singularity in being the only women's Zionist Organization in Los Angeles. In 1926 the "Pioneer Women" was born to support socialist Labor-Zionism. Women's Zionism expanded to include a new organization and a new orientation to its Zionism. In fact one of the founders, if not the main activist, came from the ranks of Hadassah leadership, Tania Bercutt. Unlike Hadassah, the Pioneer Women were organized in 1926 with a definite Socialist and Zionist orientation. It did not begin as a sewing circle or a Palestinian welfare oriented supportive organization. It began in a positive socialist and Zionist mold, as a definite part of the Labor Zionist thrust. That is why its leaders, such as Tanya Bercutt, wanted another Women's organization different from Hadassah. *49 Thus variant, hyphenated Zionism came to Women's Zionism, also.

Another general Zionist Women's Group began in 1926 also.

"The Daughters of Zion" began as a Ladies Auxiliary to the Jewish National Fund Council. *50 Little reference is made of this group later. Apparently it did not last a long time.

As previously stated, during the 1920's, under the leadership of Mrs. Adolph (Bertha) Sieroty, Hadassah became a more positive Zionist organization. The competition provided by the "Pioneer Women" may have played a role in this new emphasis.

The 1920's also witnessed in actuality the rebirth of another form of hyphenated variant Zionism. Religious Zionism was originally organized by Rabbi Isaac Werne in 1916, but it did not become a going concern. The impetus of Rabbi Meir Berlin's visit in 1917 apparently did not last in a viable form. -51 Mizrachi had to be organized once again in 1926 before it became a meaningful organization. Rabbi David I. Essrig was the instigator and organizer of the new Mizrachi Organization. *52 Once again the means that was used to effect this rebirth was the visit of a personality to the City. A "mass meeting at the Hebrew sheltering and Home for the Aged" was organized for an address by Rabbi W. Gold from Palestine and formerly from San Francisco on July 4, 1926. Rabbi Gold spoke about the achievements of the Mizrachi in Palestine.

As a result of this meeting a Mizrachi Chapter was organized under the Presidency of Rabbi Essrig. This time it remained. *53 By 1927, Mizrachi had a membership of 150. Although Religious Zionism was small in Los Angeles, it did exist now and added to the major spectrum of Zionist Organizations as they existed in the rest of the country.

Religious-Zionism was the weakest link in the Zionist chain of Organizations in Los Angeles during the 1920's. *54 This is extremely interesting considering the fact that there was no organized Orthodox anti-Zionism in Los Angeles. In other parts of the country the Agudah movement and many Orthodox Rabbis opposed Zionism.

That was not true in Los Angeles. All Orthodox Rabbis spoke favorably of Zionism in their sermons if at all. *55 No Orthodox Rabbi or Synagogue opposed the movement. Yet Religious-Zionism remained the weakest form of Zionism in Los Angeles.

There may have been several causes. Many of those orthodox Jews who were Zionist activists in the early days became involved in general Zionism. Many of the leaders of general Zionism came from synagogue sources. Rabbi Myers, one of the earliest leaders began his career in Los Angeles as the Rabbi of Beth Israel. Abraham Jonah Shapiro who chaired the Exposition Park Rally of 1920 was a "Shul Jew."

General Zionism was by no means antagonistic to Jewish religion and Orthodox values. They may not have felt a need for a hyphenated Zionism.

Another reason may have been that Zionist activity and club work provided a secular outlet for free time activity. The Shul Jew in Los Angeles, at that time was caught up in the economic swirl of his environment. Whatever free time that he had for Jewish activities he may have used in his involvement with his Synagogue. The Synagogue has always been the center of the life of the Orthodox male.

Another reason, most certainly, was the lack of leadership. Leadership acts as a catalyst for organization and activity. That catalyst was absent too often in Religious-Zionism. Although

many of the Orthodox Rabbis were favorable to Zionism , only two, Rabbi Werne and Rabbi Essrig, made the effort to establish Religious-Zionism in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, general Zionism and Labor-Zionism had produced many leaders of stature and direction.

Whatever the cause or causes, Mizrahi Religious-Zionism remained weak organizationally in Los Angeles during the 1920's. *56 The more successful Mizrahi Women's Organization, Religious Zionism's counterpart of Hadassah and Pioneer Women was not even organized in Los Angeles until 1937. *57

It is true that a tremendous membership growth did not materialize in the various branches of Los Angeles Zionism during the 1920's. However, the Zionist promise with which the decade began was not completely unfulfilled. In fact this modest Zionist movement, during this decade made great achievements in developing lasting community support for the goals and financial institutions of Zionism. That self-same Zionist movement that attracted only modest membership, attracted significant support for its financial institutions, especially Keren Hayesod, the Foundation Fund. The Keren Hayesod campaign was a Zionist affair. It was a Zionist financial institution operating under Zionist auspices, established to support the Zionist endeavor in Palestine. Its control and direction did not entirely pass into general community hands until the United Jewish Appeal was established in California in 1926. Until then it was a Zionist manifestation under the management and control of the Zionist movement. Its success was a Zionist success.

Chaim Weizmann established the Foundation Fund, "Keren Hayesod," in the United States with his first visit to this country in 1921. It wasn't firmly established in America until June of 1921, at the famous Cleveland Convention. The Brandeis-Mack leadership of the Zionist Organization of America opposed it. They favored specific projects for American Zionist endeavor instead of a general Foundation Fund for all Zionist endeavor. Weizmann's leadership at the Cleveland convention of the Zionist Organization of America established the Keren Hayesod in the United States that year. Samuel Untermyer became its first National President and a fundraising campaign of national scope was begun in this country. *58

Los Angeles Zionists under the leadership of Doctors M. J. Wissotsky, Leo Blass, Harry P. Jacobson and Louis G. Reynolds began their campaign in July 1921. The campaign was a tremendous success. One hundred thousand dollars was raised. The whole Jewish Community was involved. Los Angeles was visited by great international Zionist figures such as Nahum Sokolow and Otto Warburg. A banquet was given in the Alexandria Hotel. A mass meeting was held at the Philharmonic Auditorium, seating thousands. Practically all the leadership of all the synagogues, lodges and Jewish Organizations in Los Angeles were involved. *59. A considerable sum for a Jewish Community in a city the size of Los Angeles was raised. It was furthermore, raised by Zionists under the Zionist banner. It also involved the whole Los Angeles Jewish Community in a Zionist project. This represented a success of considerable proportions for the modest sized Zionist movement of Los Angeles.

Other major Zionist workers in this historic campaign of 1921 were two more doctors: Abraham Gottlieb, Miriam Shapiro, the old activist Abraham Jonah Shapiro, B. Cohen, M. Tannenbaum, Mrs. Blass, and Mrs. Jacobson. *60

If this tremendous outpouring in support of this Zionist financial institution would have been a phenomenon limited to 1921, then its significance for Los Angeles Zionism would also be limited. It could be argued then that its success merely demonstrated an exploitation of a passing emotionalism in regard to the vicissitudes of European Jews after World War I. However, it was not limited to 1921. The Keren Hayesod campaign continued very successfully as a Zionist campaign, until its merger into the United Jewish Appeal in 1926. *61

The continuance of this manifestation of the Keren Hayesod as one of the leading financial campaigns in the Jewish Community each year, indicated a strong sympathy for a Zionist solution to the problems of European Jewry.

Since Zionism's political goal of achieving the right to create a national home for the Jewish people had apparently succeeded, American Zionism's main purpose now was to effectuate this goal by supporting the financial instruments that it needed.

Los Angeles Jews were clearly affected in a permanent way, by this Zionist purpose. Even later, when the Keren Hayesod was absorbed by the United Jewish Appeal, a non-Zionist community institution, it merely indicated continued Zionist success. The funds disbursed

to the Keren Hayesod by United Jewish Appeal still went to support a Zionist endeavor. The community understood and supported those disbursements. They clearly remained convinced of the correctness of the Zionist solution, among others.

The period of the leadership of the Doctors in Los Angeles Zionism continued on into the decade. They made this decade the high point of Zionism in Los Angeles. *62

A new and important addition to the Keren Hayesod doctor leaders came to Los Angeles Zionism in 1922. Dr. George Saylin, came from Buffalo, New York and soon became one of Zionism's outstanding leaders. *63 It is very curious that most of the outstanding leaders in this financial and institutional Zionist success of the 1920's were doctors. Since that time the role of the doctors, as a professional group, involved in Zionist endeavor has never again been prominent. Dr. Saylin first participated in the leadership of the Keren Hayesod campaign of 1923 with Dr. Harry P. Jacobson. *64

They continued their collaboration in the campaign of 1924 when they were successful in bringing Chaim Weizmann to Los Angeles to arouse enthusiasm for this centrally important Zionist fund. *65 Dr. Saylin became Chairman of the "Jewish National Fund," another Zionist fund raising institution, *66 Keren Hayesod, the Foundation Fund, financed Zionist projects and settlements to be carried out on Palestinian land. The Jewish National Fund bought that land upon which those settlements and projects were to be based.

Unlike the Keren Hayesod, the Jewish National Fund, fund raising always remained a specifically Zionist endeavor

under Zionist management. Dr. Saylin's work in the success of that institution was always identifiably Zionist.

The collaboration of these two Zionist leaders did not end in their contributions to the success of the two basic Zionist Funds. They and Dr. Louis G. Reynolds also became involved in the organization and support of Jacob Alkow's Zionist oriented Modern Talmud Torah. *67 Although this institution was not sponsored by the Zionist Organization it was a Zionist institution philosophically. It certainly was not unusual that these significant Los Angeles Zionist leaders became involved in this project.

Personally, the two doctors collaboration also continued. Together they purchased a small newspaper called the "California Jewish Review." By the time they sold it to Jonah J. Cummins it became a significant factor in the Los Angeles Jewish community. *68

Despite all the activity in the financial campaigns, Los Angeles still remained a backwater in American Zionism, in the 1920's.

This was demonstrated by two events: The Cleveland Convention of the Zionist Organization of America in 1921 and the visit of the most prestigious World Zionist leader, Chaim Weizmann, to Los Angeles in 1924.

The Cleveland Convention was a major turning point in American Zionist life. An important disagreement had developed between the leadership of the Zionist Organization of America and the World Zionist Organization. Chaim Weizmann, the President of the World Zionist Organization envisioned a control and leadership of the return to Zion through this organization. Justice Louis Brandeis

and Judge Julian Mack who led the American Zionists envisioned the World Zionist Organization as a confederation, not directing but only coordinating, the activities of national Zionist Groups. The American leadership wanted American control.

As previously stated, the American leadership did not want a general fund supporting all Zionist endeavor. They wanted each Zionist National Group to sponsor and control its own projects.

Furthermore, the American leadership wanted only Zionist control in fund raising for Zionist institutions. Chaim Weizmann and the World Zionist leadership wanted to tap the financial resources of friendly American non-Zionists by allowing their involvement as non-Zionists in the institutions for which they would work.

Things "came to a head" at the Cleveland Convention of 1921. Chaim Weizmann came to America, conferred with the American leadership and finally challenged them at Cleveland. He went over their heads to the convention and won. New leadership, friendly to his vision, was elected. American Zionist leadership was changed and its orientation was altered. *69

The effect that this historic convention had upon Los Angeles was diffuse. Organizationally it had little effect. Membership did not increase greatly either before or after this convention. It remained small, but noteworthy. *70 Little polarization, identification and emotion, over the issues and personalities, were displayed by Los Angeles Zionists before or after the convention.

This is all the more remarkable because at this convention the leadership of America's most prestigious Jewish and Zionist leader was rejected. A revolution in leadership and direction took place.

The meeting of the Los Angeles District which elected its delegate to represent them at the convention, had to be instructed as to the issues and argument at the convention. President Marco Newmark, Dr. M. J. Wissotsky and Rabbi Solomon M. Neches devoted themselves to this task. Finally, the veteran Zionist, Dr. Louis G. Reynolds was elected, without instructions on his position, to represent the District at the Convention. The District remained neutral allowing the delegate to vote as he pleased. However, he was charged with using his influence in "dissipating differences and bringing about peace in the Zionist Camp. " *71 For such an historic Convention, this meeting demonstrated little fire. The membership seemed predominantly interested in preventing splits in the national organization. They showed little interest or knowledge about the vital issues as to the direction that the organization would take.

This curious callousness of Los Angeles Zionism to the vital issues of the direction of the Zionist movement was displayed again, after the convention. Dr. M.J. Wissotsky was probably the most responsible Los Angeles Zionist voice of the period. *72 He published a lengthy article in a leading Los Angeles Jewish newspaper at that time. Dr. Wissotsky did not describe and explain the great changes and new directions the convention effected in American Zionism.

Instead he devoted the article, at great length, denying the news reported in the general press that the Zionist Organization of America was splitting. *73

No doubt this information was important to Los Angeles Zionists and the Los Angeles Jewish Community. However, if the Los Angeles Zionist movement would have been truly alive to the great Zionist issues of the day its leading spokesman would also have devoted more space in describing and explaining those important changes and new directions.

This lack of organizational and ideological effect of the important Cleveland Convention, upon Los Angeles Zionism demonstrated the remoteness of the Los Angeles movement to the mainstream of the American Zionist current. Los Angeles was still not a major Jewish population center. These were still located in the East. The ebb, flow and dramatic movements in American Jewish life manifested themselves in the heart of the Jewish population, in the East. Los Angeles was a backwater, isolated from the full effects of that ebb, flow and movement. This was especially true in American Zionism. Los Angeles organizational and ideological reaction, to the historic Cleveland Convention, demonstrated this. *74

As stated above, the effects of the Cleveland Convention on the Los Angeles Zionist movement was diffuse. Organizationally and ideologically it had little effect. Financially and in community

direction, it had a profound effect. Keren Hayesod, in the United States, was established by the Cleveland convention. Immediately in Los Angeles, as described previously, it became active and effective under Zionist leadership. Zionist leadership thus gained stature and importance within the Los Angeles Jewish community, while the movement remained small. In that way the Cleveland Convention affected Los Angeles Zionism immensely.

Nevertheless, this same Cleveland Convention can be said to have eventually, though not immediately lessened the influence of Los Angeles Zionist leadership. One of the purposes of the Cleveland convention, as stated previously was to tap non-Zionist financial resources for Zionist endeavors and allow non Zionists into leadership positions. This was effectuated in Los Angeles even before the merger of Keren Hayesod with the United Jewish Appeal, in 1926. Although all the early Keren Hayesod leaders were Zionists, one of the last was a prestigious non Zionist, Judge Harry Holzer, a community leader. *75 In 1926, of course, the general community took Keren Hayesod over totally, in California with its inclusion in the United Jewish Appeal. The latter event was not prescribed by the convention but it was certainly in agreement with its thrust. Therefore, although the immediate result of the Cleveland convention increased the Stature and influence of Los Angeles Zionist leaders, the eventual result might have lessened their influence on the community.

This was indeed a strange convention with a strange diffused effect in regard to Los Angeles Zionism. From the organizational, ideological viewpoint it had little effect. From the Zionist community leadership viewpoint, it had a strong effect at first and a lessening effect afterwards. From a financial supportive viewpoint it had a strong and lasting effect.

The visit of Chaim Weizmann to Los Angeles, in support of Keren Hayesod, illustrates this effect of the Cleveland Convention on Los Angeles Zionism.

Considerable planning went into the preparation for this visit, on the part of Keren Hayesod Committee. Doctors Saylin and Jacobson especially exerted themselves in arousing enthusiasm for the visit. The "Los Angeles Jewish Review" was given over completely to the campaign and the visit. Planning was done to involve state, local government and the scholarly community, as well as the Jewish Community, in an elaborate reception for this great Zionist leader. *76

On Wednesday April 9, 1924 Chaim Weizmann did visit Los Angeles. A great reception was accorded him involving the political leaders of the state, the Mayor and City Council, and professors from the scholarly community. A great dinner was held for Dr. Weizmann at the Biltmore Hotel. A sizable audience was addressed by the Zionist leader at the Philharmonic Auditorium. *77 This was truly a significant day in Jewish Los Angeles. The visit of this Zionist leader occasioned a general recognition of the Jewish community that

it seldom achieved. It gave orientation to the Jewish community involving Zionist goals and aspirations. It was a high point in the history of Jewish Los Angeles and its Zionist movement.

Financially, the visit was very successful. The Keren Hayesod Zionist fund prospered that year in Los Angeles. Organizationally it had no great effect. There wasn't any great membership increase as a result of this esteemed visit of Zionism's greatest leader. *78

Los Angeles remained a backwater, isolated from the ferment of Zionist ideas. Its most important Zionist leaders exerted that leadership on the Jewish community principally in raising money for the Zionist funds. Control in these fund raising endeavors was being assumed by the leadership of the general Jewish community.

Chaim Weizmann's visit did not change these manifestations regarding Zionism in Los Angeles. Chaim Weizmann, in fact, did not show interest in building the Los Angeles Zionist movement. He was here to raise money for Keren Hayesod. *79 Dr. Weizmann's orientation and the orientation of the Cleveland convention was raising American money for the Zionist programmes in Palestine. The American Zionist movement was to be used in effecting this goal. However, the general Jewish community was also to be brought into its effectuation.

Los Angeles was removed from the mainstream of American Jewish life. Dr. Weizmann didn't even visit this community until 1924 when he came to the United States for the second time. Heated discussion of Zionist issues rarely took place. Yet, this city

became a fine example of the Cleveland orientation. Leadership of Zionists in establishing the fund and then their gradual displacement with increased concentration on the general Jewish community.

Consciously, most Los Angeles survivors involved with the Zionism of the 1920's see little effect of the Cleveland convention and the Weizmann visit. *80 However, the effect as stated above is apparent.

In summary, Zionism's third decade in Los Angeles, the 1920's was its high point in this city. The decade began with a show of Zionist enthusiasm with the great mandate Rally at Exposition Park, that was organized and led by the Zionist movement. Zionist membership grew in this decade, became significant, but was disappointing in consideration of the Zionist enthusiasm shown. More importantly, the range of Zionist spectrum grew broader. Labor Zionists and to a lesser extent, Religious-Zionists became important parts of the Zionist movement in Los Angeles.

Important significant leadership also began to develop in Los Angeles Zionism, during this decade. This leadership showed itself in three areas: broadening the Zionist scope, innovating new institutions aimed at Zionist ends, and pioneering the Zionist fund campaigns in this city.

The greatest success was in the Keren Hayesod campaign that resulted from the Cleveland convention. It found its leadership

in an unusual group of Los Angeles Doctors who were enwrapped in the Zionist dream: Dr. M.J. Wissotsky, Dr. Leo Blass, Dr. Louis G. Reynolds, Dr. Harry P. Jacobson and Dr. George Saylin.

Another doctor, an optometrist, Dr. Nathan Saltzman and a housewife, Tania Bercutt displayed significant leadership in the introduction and expansion of Labor Zionism in Los Angeles.

Besides Mrs. Bercutt, the only important Zionist leader, of this decade, who was not a doctor was Jacob Alkow. His work resulted in the involvement of Young people in Zionism and the establishment of two Zionist oriented institutions aimed at youth. *The Modern Talmud Torah and the Boyle Heights Jewish Center were not sponsored by the Los Angeles Zionist movement but they were Zionist inspired. *81 Doctors Jacobson, Saylin and Reynolds, three leading Zionist activists took an important role in the support of Jacob Alkows innovative institutions.

Los Angeles movement still showed its insensitivity to the role of youth and education in the Zionist endeavor. Fund raising to support world Zionists institutions that was to principally service overseas Jews, was its hallmark.

Nevertheless, with all its inadequacies, the achievements of this decade made it the high point of the Zionist movement in Los Angeles.

Chapter 3 Footnotes

1a Los Angeles Times Part 11 P. 1 June 28, 1920-gave the figure of 25,000

1b Bnai Brith Messenger July 9, 1920- gave the figure of 10,000

2. Geo Saylin ed., J.N.F. of L.A. Jubilee No. 1902-27, p82

3a L.A. Times Part 11 Page 1 June 28, 1920

3b Bnai Brith Messenger July 9, 1920

4a Aaron Riche Interview (Tape in possession of Author) July 8, 1970

4b William Blumenthal Interview (Tape in possession of author)
July 9, 1970

4c. Rabbi Edgar Magnin Interview (Tape in possession of author)
Aug. 13, 1971

5. Riche Interview Op. Cit.

6. Rivka Goldberg Interview (Tape in possession of author) Aug. 3, 1970

7a. Jacob Alkow Interview (Tape in possession of author) Aug. 11, 1970

7b. Joseph L. Malamut, "The Jewish National Fund Council of Los Angeles"
(Southwest Jewry Vol 111: Jewish Institutions and their Leaders
1957) pp 49-50

7c. Geo Saylin Op. Cit.

7d. Joseph L Malamut, "Early Pioneers of J.N.F. (So. West Jewry Vol.111:
Jewish Institutions and their Leaders 1957) p. 49

7e. Bnai Brith Messenger June 17, 1921

7f. S. Rosen, "Der Onheib fun Tsionism in California", J. L Malamut ed.
("Zunland," Jewish Diamond Jubilee No. Sept 1925) p p 73-76

7g. Joseph L. Malamut ed. "Southwest Jewry Vol 1 (Sunland Publishing Co., 1926) p p. 91-92

8. Riche interview Op. Cit.

9a. Bnai Brith Messenger Sept 10, 1920

9b. J.L. Malamud ed. (Sunland: Calif Diamond Jubilee No. Sept 1925)

10 Bnai Brith Messenger Sept 10, 1920

11a Bnai Brith Messenger, Sept 24, 1920

11b. Bnai Brith Messenger March 26, 1926

11c. Bnai Brith Messenger April 30, 1926

11d. Bnai Brith Messenger April 8, 1927

12. Bnai Brith Messenger, May 13, 1921

13. Bnai Brith Messenger, Aug. 10, 1923

14a. Bnai Brith Messenger, April 30, 1926

14b. Bnai Brith Messenger, Dec. 31, 1926

15a Rivka Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

15b. Alkow Interview Op Cit

16. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

17a. Riche Interview Op. Cit

17b Alkow Interview Op. Cit

17c. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit

18. Bnai Brith Messenger, Feb. 25, 1927

19a. Blumenthal Interview, Op. Cit.

19b. Riche Interview, Op. Cit.

20a. Riche Interview, Op. Cit.

20b Joseph L. Malamut ed. Southwest Jewry Vol. 1 (Sunland Publishing Co., 1926)

- 21 . Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
22. Ibid
- 23a. Ibid
- 23b J. L Malamut ed. (Zunland, Calif. Diamond Jubilee No. Sept. 1925)
- 24a. S. Rosen, Op. Cit.
- 24b Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 25a. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 25b. A. Riche, "Zionism in Los Angeles", Geo Saylin, ed
J.N.F. of L.A. Jubilee No. 1902-1927)
- 26a. A. Riche, "Zionism in Los Angeles," Geo. Saylin, ed.
J.N.F. of L.A. Jubilee No. 1902-1927)
- 26b. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 27a. A. Riche "Zionism in Los Angeles" Geo. Saylin ed.
(J.N.F. of L. A. Jubilee No. 1902-1927)
- 27b. Alkow Interview, Op. Cit.
28. Alkow Interview, Op. Cit.
29. Bnai Brith Messenger Nov. 12, 1920
- 30a. Aaron Riche Interview July 8, 1970
- 30b. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.
- 30c. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 31a. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 31b. Aaron Riche Interview July 8, 1970
- 32a. Rose Pahn, "Junior Hadassah", Geo Saylin ed (J.N.F. of
L.A. Jubilee No 1902-1927)

32b Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

33. Joseph L. Malamut ed, Southwest Jewry Vol 111 (Los Angeles Jewish Institutions and their Leaders, 1957) p. 204

34. Joseph L. Malamut ed., Southwest Jewry Vol. 111 (Los Angeles Jewish Institutions and their Leaders, 1957) pp.139-140

35. Joseph L. Malamut ed., "Southwest Jewry Vol 111" (Los Angeles Jewish Institutions and their Leaders, 1957) p. 175

36. Ibid. p. 175

37a. Goldberg Interview, Op. Cit.

37b. Alkow Interview, Op. Cit.

37c. Joseph L. Malamut ed. "Southwest Jewry Vol 111 (Los Angeles: "Jewish Institutions and their Leaders", 1957) p. 33

38a. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit

39. Joseph L. Malamut ed. "Southwest Jewry Vol 111 (Los Angeles: Jewish Institutions and their Leaders," 1957) p.175

40a Riche Interview July 8, 1970

40b. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

40c. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

41a. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

41b. Bnai Brith Messenger, March 26, 1926

42. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

43. Bnai Brith Messenger, March 26, 1926

44. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

45. Bnai Brith Messenger March 26, 1926

46a. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

46b. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

47 Alkow Interview Op. Cit

48a. Riche Interview July 8, 1970

48b. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

48c. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

49 . Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.

50. Malamut, Southwest Jewry Vol. 111, Op Cit. pp49-50

51. Bnai Brith Messenger March 8, 1918

52a. Bnai Brith Messenger, July 9, 1926

52b Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

52c Blumenthal Interview Op. Cit.

53 Bnai Brith Messenger July 9, 1926

54. Riche Interview July 8, 1970

55. Magnin Interview Op. Cit.

56a. Riche Interview July 8, 1970

56b. Rabbi David I Essrig, "History of Mizrachi," Geo. Saylin ed.

(J.N.F. of L.A. Jubilee No. 1902-1927)

57. L.A. Council Mizrachi Women, First Chapter founded 1937 in Los Angeles

58. Chaim Weizmann, "Trial and Error" (New York:Harper and Brothers,

19490 pp265-270

59a. S. Rosen Op. Cit pp73-76

- 59b. J.L. Malamut, "Dr. Wissotsky", Joseph L Malamut ed,
("Zunland California Diamond Jubilee Number Sept. 1925)
- 59c. J. L. Malamut "Dr. Leo Blass", Joseph L. Malamut ed.
(Zunland California Diamond Jubilee Number Sept. 1925) p.37
- 59d. Alkow Interview, Op. Cit.
- 59e. Bnai Brith Messenger June 17, 1921
60. S. Rosen Op. Cit. pp.73-76
61. A. Riche "Zionism in Los Angeles," Geo Saylin ed.
(J.N.F. of L.A. Jubilee No. 1902-19270
62. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 63a. Ibid
- 63b. J.L. Malamut ed. (Zunland, Calif Diamond Jubilee No. Sept 1925)
64. S. Rose Op. Cit. pp73-76
65. Ibid.
66. Geo. Saylin Op. Cit.
- 67a. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 67b. J. L. Malamut, Southwest Jewry Vol 1, Op. Cit.
68. J. L Malamut, Southwest Jewry Vol 1, Op. Cit
69. Weizmann Op. Cit. pp 269-270
- 70a. Riache Interview July 8, 1970
- 70b. Blumenthal Interview Op. Cit.
- 70c. Bnai Brith Messenger July 11, 1926
71. Bnai Brith Messenger May 20, 1921
72. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

- 73. Bnai Brith Messenger June 24, 1921
- 74a. Riche Interview July 8, 1970
- 74b. Blumenthal Interview Op. Cit.
- 74c. Magnin Interview Op. Cit.
- 74d. Goldberg Interview Op. Cit.
- 75a. Joseph L. Malamut ed. "Southwest Jewry Vol 1" (Sunland Publishing Co. 1926) pp86-88
- 75b. S. Rosen Op. Cit. pp73-76
- 76a. Bnai Brith Messenger March 14, 1924
- 76b. Bnai Brith Messenger March 21, 1924
- 76c. Bnai Brith Messenger March 28, 1924
- 76d. S. Rosen Op. Cit. pp 73-76
- 77a. Bnai Brith Messenger March 14, 1924
- 77b. Bnai Brith Messenger March 21, 1924
- 77c. Bnai Brith Messenger March 28, 1924
- 77d. S. Rosen Op. Cit. pp73-76
- 78. Riche Interview July 8, 1970
- 79. S. Rosen Op. Cit. pp73-76
- 80a. Riche Interview July 8, 1970
- 80b. Blumenthal Interview Op. Cit.
- 80c. Magnin Interview Op. Cit.
- 80d. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.
- 81. Alkow Interview Op. Cit.

Chapter 4.

Rabbinic and Synagogue Involvement in Los Angeles Zionism

The story of synagogal and Rabbinic endeavor, in the beginnings and growth of Zionism in the Los Angeles area is an interesting one. It is interesting for reasons of omissions as well as commissions.

The first decade Zionism, of Avat Zion and Young Zionists Association was predominantly Eastern European. Several prominent Orthodox "Shul Jews" were also prominent in the early leadership of these groups. The first vice president of Avat Zion, L. Hillman was a cantor and "shoichet" (ritual slaughterer) associated with the Olive Street Shul. *1 S. Rose, an elected cantor at Beth Israel. *2 and Abraham Jonah Shapin, *3 were other early Zionist activists of this type prominent in leadership. Since the early Zionist membership was almost entirely East-European, there was probably a good percentage who were active in the East European Orthodox synagogues. Yet, there were only two Orthodox Rabbis who played an important role in Zionist cause, Rabbis Isaac Werne and David I. Essrig. Furthermore, religious Zionism, that appealed especially to Orthodox Jews was never really successful. It was always "the weak horse" of the (Zionist) Organization. *4

Why was there such a lack of involvement by the Orthodox synagogues and by the Rabbis? It was not because of any organized Orthodox anti-Zionist movement such as the Agudah movement. The Agudah

did not exist in Los Angeles. There was not even any unorganized Orthodox feeling against Zionism in Los Angeles. Los Angeles Orthodox circles were generally favorable to the idea. Yet, they were predominantly uninvolved. *5

Rabbi Solomon Neches, one of Los Angeles most prominent Orthodox Rabbis, symbolized this whole phenomenon. Rabbi Neches was instrumental in the beginnings and growth of two important Orthodox synagogues in Los Angeles. He came to this city with the reputation as an important Jewish scholar. He was a student of the greatest Orthodox Zionist philosopher, the chief Rabbi of Palestine, Ha Rav Abraham Isaac Kook. *6 He was active in the Zionist Organization of America before he came to Los Angeles. He founded the Zionist District in Columbus, Ohio. He was its President for two years and was elected to the Zionist Congress at Carlsbad. *7 However, when he came to Los Angeles in 1918, his Zionist activities diminished. He did not figure prominently in the Los Angeles Zionist movement, nor did he extend himself greatly in aiding that movement. Yet, he remained friendly to Zionism throughout his life. At times he even took part in some small activity. *8

Rabbi Neches' inactivity and the preponderant lack of activity of the Orthodox establishment, probably reflects the economics of Los Angeles, at that time, more than anything else.

The Eastern European immigrant to Los Angeles was concerned mostly with himself and his family. He was busy establishing himself in the new environment. His outside involvements were few because his powers were concentrated upon his own success. *9 Leadership also did not exist. *10 Rabbi Neches could have possibly offered that leadership but didn't. Perhaps, he was too greatly involved in his personal success as were others.

Nevertheless, the Orthodox synagogues and rabbinate were always pro-Zionist. There were many favorable sermons. The synagogues were often used for Zionist meetings, especially in the early days. However, deep involvement remained small. *11 Rabbi Isaac Werne and Rabbi David Essrig, who organized Mizrachi were the only important exceptions.

At its onset, the role of the conservative establishment in Zionism was much more pronounced in both its Rabbini~~k~~ and lay leadership. Two of the earliest and strongest Zionist voices that Los Angeles ever produced were Rabbi Isadore Myers and Doctor Louis G. Reynolds. Both of these men were also prominent in establishing conservative Judaism in Los Angeles.

Temple Sinai was that city's first successful conservative synagogue. Rabbi Myers was elected its original Rabbi at that time of its establishment and became a spokesman for its conservative principles. *12 Doctor Reynolds was also intimately involved as a lay leader in this Temple. *13

Actually, Rabbi Myers was first brought to this city from San Francisco by the Orthodox Congregation, Beth Israel, as that Congregation's first Rabbi. *14 Nevertheless, he cannot be considered an Orthodox Rabbi. He did not stay with Beth Israel because of the antagonisms aroused when he attempted to introduce Conservative reforms into the service. *15 When the new Conservative Sinai Congregation was organized, soon afterwards, he became its first Rabbi and a spokesman for Conservatism. *16

Rabbi Myer's work for the Zionist cause and for the Zionist Organization, as described above, was energetic and wholehearted. He was a tireless organizer and speaker. He chaired the great Balfour Day Rally in Clunes Auditorium in 1918. *17 He was prominent in the Committee that arranged enlistments in the Jewish Legion during World War I. *18 He was the principal speaker at the great Mandate rally in Exposition Park in 1920. *19 His was certainly the outstanding rabbinical voice for the Zionist cause in Los Angeles. In fact there were few who matched his Zionist endeavor in or out of the Rabbinical profession, during this time.

One of those few was also a conservative leader from Sinai Congregation, Dr. Louis G. Reynolds. *20 His career in Los Angeles Zionism was of longer duration and was as truly remarkable as was that of Rabbi Myers. (Rabbi Myers death in an auto accident in 1923 cut short his services to the Zionist cause.)*21 Dr. Reynolds was one of the earliest spokesmen for Zionism in its first

decade in Los Angeles. He introduced the Zionist resolutions at the great Balfour Rally of 1918. *22 and the Mandate Rally of 1920. *23 He was the delegate from Los Angeles at the decisive Cleveland Convention of the Zionist Organization of America in 1921. *24 He was one of the important "doctor leaders" of the "Keren Hayesod" drives of the 1920's. *25 He was one of the leaders in the promotion and support of the Modern Talmud Torah, conceived by Jacob Alkow as a Zionist oriented school. *26

Dr. Reynolds was also one of the important lay leaders of Temple Sinai.

In the roles played by these two important Conservative leaders, Zionism did receive great support from the conservative establishment.

However, this same type of leadership and support was not reflected to any great extent in their conservative establishment contemporaries and successors until much later.

Rabbi Myers was associated with Temple Sinai for only six years. *27 Some of his rabbinic successors identified themselves as Zionists and performed some services for the movement. Rabbi David Likhaitz played a role in attempting to organize Hadassah in Los Angeles. *28 He was also one of the speakers at the Balfour Mass Meeting in Clunes Auditorium that was chaired by Rabbi Myers. *29 In addition to that he used his pen at times to write for the Zionist cause. *30

Rabbi Jacob Kohn was a member and officer of the Los Angeles Zionist District at one time. *31 But, none of them showed the fervor and leadership of Rabbi Myers.

Rabbi Mayer Winkler, indeed, demonstrated a certain amount of antagonism. This antagonism was not philosophical and it did not become a great campaign. It was basically a fear that Zionism would interfere in his synagogal domain. *32

In the lay area also, there were no great contemporaries and successors to Dr. Reynolds until much later.

The conservative establishment became more like that of the Orthodox. They both became favorably benign toward the Zionist movement.

The great surprise in the field of synagogal and Rabbinic support occurred in the Reform movement. The greatest opposition, in the United States, toward Zionism was that of Reform Judaism, at this time.

The basic principles of American Reform, were established at the Pittsburgh Conference of 1895. An eight plank platform was adopted as the fundamental expression of its principles. The fifth plank was very explicit in rejecting the idea of a Jewish nation and of a return to Palestine. *33

The Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinic arm of the Reform movement, adopted this platform in its entirety, when it was founded in 1889. It remained the basic stated beliefs

of the Reform Movement until its revision by that organization at Columbus, Ohio in 1937. *34

This period of antagonism by the American Reform movement towards any concept of Jewish peoplehood, was the time when Zionism was established in Los Angeles. Strangely, this deep rooted Reform antagonism did not really materialize here. On the whole, Reform was also benign. No great opposition to Zionism developed in Los Angeles, as in other centers of the Reform movement. In fact, gradually this benign attitude began to assume a more friendly aspect. The old line Reform Jews of Los Angeles' original settlers never became as active in Zionism as the Eastern European newcomers, but there were some notable exceptions. Even beyond that, the "Bnai Brith Temple", the center of Los Angeles old line Reform, often gave its pulpit to visiting Zionist speakers and lent its facilities for Zionist affairs.

The seeming contradiction between Los Angeles Reform and the ideological thrust of the general American Reform movement leaves one to wonder how it materialized. Perhaps, there are several explanations.

It is true that the most important opposition to Zionism in the United States, developed in Reform circles based upon Reform ideology. However, this opposition usually centered around Temples which had strong leadership from a very effective ideological Rabbi. *35

The lay leadership of American Reform have rarely been that ideological. Reform developed in the United States as a method of Jewish adjustment to the general American environment. It was an opportunity, siezed by many lay Jews to become like everyone else, yet retain their Jewish identification. Reform ideology, principally imported from Germany, was not that all absorbing to these pragmatic Jews. It became important only when ideological rabbinical leadership gave true direction towards acceptance of its philosophical principles. This occurred in some communities. In others, it did not. (There were a number of Reform Rabbis at this time, notably, Steven S. Wise, Abba Hillel Silver, Judah Magnes, who gave important leadership to the opposite direction in favor of Zionism). In Los Angeles anti-Zionist Rabbinical leadership did not materialize. Reform remained a pragmatic movement, it did not become ideological. The anti-Zionism of early Reform was not impressed upon the Los Angeles Reform laity by any dynamic anti-Zionist leadership. In fact the leadership was predominantly favorably benign.

Rabbi Sigmund Hecht recieved his appointment as spiritual leader of Bnai Brith Temple late in 1899, as its fourth spiritual leader. Nevertheless, he was its first significant reform rabbi, of important stature. His predecessors were Rabbi Abraham Wolf Edelman, Rabbi Emanuel Ephraim Schrieber, Rabbi Abraham Blum and Moses G. Solomon. Edelman, Bnai Brith's first Rabbi was traditional and resigned when the congregation became reform. Schrieber's tenure at the

at the congregation was not long because he tried to introduce extreme reform practices while the Congregation was still in a period of transition. Solomon's tenure was also short because he, like Edelman, was too traditional. In 1899 Rabbi Hecht was brought to Los Angeles and gave the Bnai Brith Temple its first enduring reform rabbinical leadership.

Previous to his coming to Los Angeles, Dr. Hecht expressed himself several times as a true ideological Reformer, alive to the anti-Zionist philosophy of the Pittsburgh Platform. In an article that he wrote for the Milwaukee Journal on November 30, 1890, he was very explicit. He wrote that, "___ the mere suggestion ___" of the "___ establishment of a separate and independent Jewish Kingdom ___" is ___ little short of treason. ___". *36

As late as September 23, 1897, two years before he came to Los Angeles, Dr. Hecht attacked Herzl's Zionist movement on the pages of "The American Israelite.*37 However, after he came to Los Angeles, these anti-Zionist expressions of the true believer disappeared. There is no trace of any attack by Dr. Hecht against Zionist principles or Zionist organizations, institutions or leadership in Los Angeles or elsewhere after his advent to the Los Angeles scene. *38 In fact, the Rabbi made an appearance and gave a short address to the first great Zionist Mass Rally on Balfour Day at Clunes Auditorium on January 27, 1918. *39 This rally was staged by the Zionist movement to celebrate the greatest Zionist achievement to

that date, the acquisition of the legal right of Jews to Palestine. The appearance and the well wishes of Dr. Hecht denoted a considerable change in attitude since his coming to Los Angeles.

Perhaps there were several reasons for this change. Los Angeles' Bnai Brith Temple was far removed from Reform ideological heartland. Its most important lay leader of this period was Dr. David W. Edelman, the son of the former Rabbi. *40 Dr. Edelman had strong Jewish ethnic roots and later became a proclaimed Zionist. *41. The Temple had previously rejected another Reform Rabbi, Rabbi Schrieber, who was too enthusiastic in his Reform ideology. This milieu might have made an impression on Dr. Hecht. Also, World War I broke out in Europe, during the period of Dr. Hecht's service to the Temple. In that conflagration, the Jewish populations in Europe suffered tremendously. Few sensitive Jews in the United States could feel antagonistic to any plan that could offer hope to these European Jews. Zionism could be better tolerated. Indeed, it was in 1918, shortly after the war, that Dr. Hecht appeared on a Zionist platform at a Zionist rally.

The unusual tolerance and receptivity of the Bnai Brith Temple and the Los Angeles Reform movement was due more to the advent of the influence of Dr. Hecht's new young associate in 1914 rather than himself. *42 In that year the Temple hired Dr. Edger Fogel Magnin from a pulpit in Stockton, California for spiritual leadership with Dr. Hecht who had reached the age of sixty five. *43

He very early became a strong influence in the Temple. #44 Dr. Magnin was from a conservative, ethnic background. #45 He was sympathetic and helpful to American "philanthropic Zionism". Under Dr. Magnin's leadership, the pulpit of the Bnai Brith Temple was offered to every important Zionist speaker who came to Los Angeles. #46 Anti-Zionist speakers were never offered that forum. #47 Hadassah, the leading Women's Zionist Organization began its development at the Temple during Dr. Magnin's early leadership. The Nathan Straus Palestine Society, which represented the involvement of "establishment" German Jews in the support of the Palestinian Jewish settlement, also developed in and around the Temple during Dr. Magnin's leadership.

Dr. Magnin influenced Marco Newmark, a leader of Los Angeles establishment Jews, from a most prestigious family, to become active in Zionist affairs. #48 Dr. Magnin even became somewhat involved in the Zionist movement himself. #49 Under this kind of leadership it was impossible for any strong anti-Zionist spirit to develop in the Bnai Brith Temple. Since that Temple was the epicenter of the Los Angeles Reform movement it was impossible for anti-Zionism to make any real inroads. Thus it remained that no real opposition to Zionism ever developed in Los Angeles. The Bnai Brith Temple and Dr. Edgar F. Magnin played leading roles in this manifestation.

Chapter 4 Footnotes

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- 27b. Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, "History of the Jews of Los Angeles" (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1970) p. 163
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Chapter 5.

A Summation

"Zionism", the essential Jewish Nationalist movement was fundamentally different, from the other historic modern secular Jewish philosophies of "Emancipation" and "Autonomism". It was not only different but it was opposed. In other places, in the United States and elsewhere, heated and fervent contest was made. The heart and soul of the Jewish people was the prize.

In contradistinction from emancipation, Zionism maintained and promoted the nationality of the Jewish people against the purely religious identification of Jews. In regard to fellow Jews, Zionism had no patience with such terms as "co-religionists" "Americans (or Germans or Poles) of Mosaic persuasion". It insisted that Jews were a "nation". It established schools to teach the national culture and their version of the national language to the young. Youth groups were established to instil nationalist enthusiasm in the young and direct them to "Aliyah", emigration to the National homeland. Youth camps were established to increase that enthusiasm. Preparation farms were established to practically prepare them for emigration and a new agricultural life. New social forms such as the Kibbutz and the Moshav were innovated to make possible a Zionist emigration to the Homeland. International funding institutions, such as the

Jewish National Fund and the Foundation Fund were established to finance the upbuilding of the National homeland and to centrally direct its course. The Jewish nation was to be normalized by having the National homeland reestablished. Hebrew literature along with other forms of cultural expression were promoted to provide for modern continuity of the Jewish national culture. There was a distinct, pronounced, difference between the Zionists and the emancipationists. They were in competition for Jewish allegiance. In some places this philosophical contest became very fierce.

The same struggle for the heart and soul of the Jewish masses was undertaken against "autonomism". This was true, especially, in autonomism's strongest manifestation, the "Algemeiner Yiddisher Arbeiters Bund." Even though both movements looked upon the Jews as a people, they were yet antagonists. The Autonomists perceived the Jewish people as an ethnic group, not a nation, with primary allegiance to the countries of its inhabitation. The Bundists used the term "Doyich Keit", "hereness" to emphasize the difference with Zionism. They rejected the concept of a "National home" thus nationality. They did believe, however, that Jews constituted an ethnic group with a language (Yiddish), culture and heritage to preserve and continue.

The autonomists also claimed the right of self regulation of this ethnic community under the government of the State with ethnic representation in the social and political makeup of the state. *1

Zionist perception of the Jewish people was considerably different. Zionist agreed with the autonomists that the Jews were a people. However, the Zionists felt that they were much more than an ethnic group owing primary allegiance to their countries of inhabitation. The Zionists felt that Jews constituted an authentic nation in the abnormal condition of exile, in lands that were not their own. They believed that this exile had to be reversed and then the Jewish nation had to return to its own land. While in exile, Zionism, supported ethnic, communal, institutions such as a school system, an organized Jewish folk community, youth camps, Jewish ethnic minority representation in a non Jewish government. However, these ethnic manifestations envisioned as temporary and they were adopted for three basic reasons: 1.) To promote the continuity of the Jewish national culture. 2.) To indoctrinate a national orientation into the young, 3.) To fulfill the needs of the Jewish people in the Diaspora in preparation for their return to "Eretz Yisrael," the homeland.

The ultimate direction of the Zionist movement was Jewish return to "Eretz Yisrael", the Land of Israel. All other ethnic programs were palliative and temporary.

The vital difference between the two "folk movements" can be seen in the languages each claimed as the basic means in which Jewish culture was transmitted and would be transmitted. The Bund, the largest and most influential, Autonomist movement, stated that Yiddish, the Eastern European Jewish vernacular, was this cultural vehicle. Bundists schools and cultural institutions were predicated upon that language. The Zionists recognized "Hebrew" as the cultural vehicle of the Jewish people. Their schools and cultural institutions were predicated upon that ancient, non European language. This was true even though Hebrew was not predominantly spoken by the masses in the street.

Bundist rejection of Hebrew showed its basic distance from not only the non-European history of the Jewish people but the treasury of Jewish culture encapsulated in Hebrew. That ancient language preexisted any Yiddish manifestations by thousands of years. In Bundist formulation, the Jewish people was basically a Yiddish speaking people, predominantly of Eastern Europe. Ongoing Jewish culture was the culture associated with that language, the vernacular of the East European masses. In that manifestation it was only a few centuries old. Modern Jewish literature was fundamentally that which was written in the Yiddish language. This literature did not exist, to any great extent before the nineteenth century. *2

Zionism did not limit the Jewish people to the Yiddish speaking people from Eastern Europe. Western and Sephardic Jews, of Spanish and Oriental heritage, were also considered members of the Jewish nation. Jewish culture in their eyes was a heritage of thousands of years. It was not merely a few centuries old. The literature of the Jewish heritage pre-dated the nineteenth century before the common era, not merely the nineteenth century of the common era. In Zionist formulation the language of the Jewish nation was constant and eternal. It was the Hebrew language. Other languages such as Yiddish, Ladino, Aramaic, Judeo-Persian having existed and having played an important role in parochial Jewish culture, often not shared by the entire Jewish people. However, the basic Jewish culture shared by all Jews was looked upon as having been transmitted through Hebrew. Zionists considered the Jewish people as a nation, not an ethnic group, with a need to reestablish its land to become a healthy nation once again.

As in its contest with the ideas and orientations of Emancipation, Zionism's differences with Autonomic thinking was sharp.

Curiously, when we trace the history of the formative years of Zionism in Los Angeles we discover that this contest between Zionism and the other two philosophies were really not so sharp here. Indeed, sometimes, the distinctions between them was not even clear. This is all the more unusual because these were the formative years

of American Zionism in general and Los Angeles, in particular. Departures and differences should have been sharply apparent.

The reform temple, historically had been the Jewish institution most committed to the philosophy of "emancipation". American reform identified Jews, officially as a religious community, no longer a nation." *3 Nationwide, at the turn of the century precisely when Zionism was beginning in Los Angeles, official Reform announced its deep antipathy to the basic concepts of Zionism. In the Pittsburgh Platform of 1895 Reform rejected the Zionist philosophy in clear unequivocal terms. It abjured any expectation "of a return to Palestine" or "the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state," *4 Zionism must have been a tremendous concern to those devotees of "Emancipation".

The incorporation of its castigation into the basic platform of principles of American Reform Judaism, indicated this.

Yet, there was no real demonstration of this antagonism by Reform in Los Angeles, when Los Angeles Zionism was born. No attacks against Zionism appeared in the newspapers. No debates took place on campuses or elsewhere. No broadsides attacking Zionism were printed. Rabbis did not attack Zionism in the temple. Congregations were not instructed to boycott meetings and to refuse financial contributions. In fact, from the period of World War I on, Bnai Brith Temple, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, was

favorably benign toward Zionism. This was extremely significant because this was the institution which was not only dominant in the Los Angeles Reform movement, but it was also extremely influential in the organized general Jewish community.*

These representatives of Emancipation were not against the incipient Los Angeles Zionist movement. They did not seem to care too much. They seemed to have displayed a benign acceptance of Zionism in the guise of philanthropy. Historically, emancipationist antagonism occurred in communities where there was Reform synagogal anti-Zionist leadership. In Los Angeles, the basic Reform leadership was benignly favorable. The Reform synagogue itself, in Los Angeles, was a sociological phenomenon, not a philosophical one. Membership was not highly concerned with the principles of Reform. They wanted a means of Jewish identification without the burden of religious duties. This was not sufficient to bring them to the battlefield for true Reform principles, when they were being contested. When their leadership, much of whom came from a conservative and orthodox background, displayed a mildly favorable stance, they too looked upon Zionism favorably, basically as a charity oriented toward East European Jews. *5

Autonomist, Bundist, thinking was represented in the United States, and Los Angeles in the "Arbitler Ring", the "Workman's Circle." *6 This organization promoted the socialist, ethnic, Yiddish, non religious orientation associated with the Bund in Eastern

Europe, they regarded Yiddish as the cultural language of the Jewish people, as did the "Bund" they promoted the poetry and literature of that language. As did the "Bund" they built schools and other institutions to insure the ongoing of Yiddish culture. As did the "Bund", they promoted socialism.

In Eastern Europe and elsewhere, Zionism and the Bundist thinking were at logger heads. In Los Angeles, again, that did not develop. No struggle developed between Zionist groups and the "Workmen's Circle". The only form of antagonism that this historic confrontation took was the original inaccessibility of Workmen's Circle groups to Zionist speakers and causes. This inaccessability also gradually disappeared. Labor Zionist speakers from the Histadrut campaign finally gained entrance and gradual support from Workmen's Circle members and groups. *7 The historic struggle again did not materialize.

The threat of a Zionist displacement from America, of a people already displaced, apparently did not seem so threatening. The lands of Bundist "Doyichkeit" were, after all, Russia and Poland, not the United States. A branch of Zionism, Poalei Zion, also stressed the form of Jewish democratic-socialism in which the members of the Arbeiter Ring believed. Although Zionist, Poalei Zion was, like them, also Yiddish oriented.

Poalei Zion and Arbeiter Ring Socialists were likewise both

active in the Unions, especially the International Ladies Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Their participation in joint endeavours on the American scene bred familiarity and lessened distrust. The Arbeiter Ring Jews, like the Reformers, also lost any feeling toward active opposition against Zionism. Like the emancipationist reformers, again, they became benignly supportive of Zionist institutions.

In truth, early Los Angeles Zionism itself engendered little antagonism. Bundists and former Bundists were not antagonized for reasons stated above. Emancipationists also had little reason for any real antagonism. Zionism's "nationalism" which distinguished it from emancipationism was greatly diluted in Los Angeles.

"Aliyah", emigration to the national homeland was not promoted.

Zionist schools to indoctrinate nationalism were not originated nor supported by the Los Angeles Zionist movement (although, as noted, there was some activity in that direction by individual Zionists).

Political movements designating primary Jewish loyalty to the nascent homeland did not exist. Indeed Zionist work consisted primarily of raising funds to support the settlement of other Jews from lands of oppression to the Homeland. This could, very easily, be looked upon as another form of philanthropy, not offensive to emancipationists. In fact the original call, by Victor Harris, to establish a "Zion Society" really established this philanthropic orientation of Zionism as described in Chapter 1 of this paper.

The call was for establishing a society for the purpose of colonizing "our downtrodden coreligionists." This is hardly an expression of vigorous nationalism that would antagonize emancipationists.

This blandness, this lack of fire that developed in early Los Angeles, amongst all Jewish secular movements, presaged a similar phenomenon that affected the secular Jewish philosophies and movements in the country as a whole. All American Jews are emancipationists in that they want Jews to be treated as individuals in this country. All American Jews are autonomists in that they recognize an ethnic element in American Jewish life. All American Jews are Zionists in that they recognize a special relationship with Israel and further recognize a commitment to support the Jewish state.

This American Jewish phenomenon was forecast in the early Los Angeles experience. The direction that was early portrayed by Jewish Los Angeles, was the direction which the entire American Jewish community took. The three basic secular trends of Emancipation, Autonomism and Zionism became increasingly homogenized in early Los Angeles. This can be seen in the history of one of these movements, Zionism, in that city. It seems apparent today that this homogenization of the three secular philosophies has also become a distinctive feature of the entire American Jewish Community.

Chapter 5

Footnotes

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